

Evaluating Overview and Scrutiny Panel - Recommendations to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Evaluating Overview and Scrutiny Panel met on 14 July and 20 August 2020 to consider the principles and processes that form effective overview and scrutiny of the Council's activities and report back to the Committee with its findings and recommendations. The Minutes of the meeting are attached at Annex 1 and Annex 2.

The recommendations from the Panel are as follows:

1. Prepare a statement for all Council Members setting out the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's role as a critical friend to the Council and its principles and purpose *(to be drafted)*.
2. Establish time limited scrutiny task panels when needed, to debate and report back to the Committee. This enables the Committee to be more agile and to scrutinise issues more quickly.
3. Keep meetings shorter and focused with clear recommendations, where necessary, to the Executive. This may lead to the need more meetings of the Committee each year. The panel recommended an increased number of meetings to be held (7 in total for year 2020-21)
4. Facilitate and encourage Members to evaluate and review information provided to the Committee such as performance dashboards, in advance of meetings.
5. Make use of the Advance Questions procedure to allow officer responses to be prepared in advance of Committee meetings and to facilitate debate.
6. Actively review the current work programme at each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting and request changes, and, if necessary to conduct business, schedule additional meetings of the Committee, as noted in recommendation 3 above
7. In accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules, make provision on the agenda frontsheet for any exempt information to be considered by the Committee, as necessary in the conduct of its business.
8. Consider commissioning an external organisation such as the Centre for Public Scrutiny or Local Government Association to review the overview and scrutiny function if resources allow.